

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 91

By Freeman

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Martha Hays Cooper of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Martha Hays Cooper; and

WHEREAS, Martha Cooper was an exemplary woman and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born on September 13, 1954, Martha Hays Cooper was the second child of Dr. A.V. Hays and Dr. Martha Hays Taylor of Gulfport, Mississippi; she received her undergraduate degree from Sweet Briar College and her Master of Science degree in Ornithology from Mississippi State University; and

WHEREAS, Martha Cooper's first job in the field of ornithology was working in the attic at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, where she staffed the first two editions of the *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Cooper was an adventuresome soul who, over the course of her career, taught children and studied puffins for the Quebec-Labrador Foundation, protected least terns on the beaches of the Gulf of Mexico, camped in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and worked in the Galapagos Islands for the World Wildlife Fund, all while keeping an African grey parrot named Baroot in her kitchen; and

WHEREAS, Martha Cooper was living in the Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, D.C., when she met Jim Cooper, who was, at the time, the nation's youngest congressman; he proposed to her at a White House Christmas party, and the happy couple married on April 6, 1985; and

WHEREAS, she was deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Martha Cooper enjoyed the loving companionship of her husband of almost thirty-six years, Representative Jim Cooper; she was the proud mother of Mary Argentine Cooper (Scott) Gallisdorfer, John James Audubon Cooper, and Hayes Hightower Cooper, and the treasured grandmother of Jay; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Cooper will be sadly mourned but fondly remembered by her siblings, Art (Debbie) Hays and Mary Hays (Steve) Peller; her main caregiver and friend, Sandy Mathers; and her friends, Heather Tavasti and Alyssa Action; and

WHEREAS, Martha Cooper leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Martha Hays Cooper, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Cooper.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.